Homeless Vets Have High Rates of HIV and Hepatitis B and C

The prevalence of each virus is up to three times higher among homeless versus non-homeless veterans.

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Homeless veterans have up to three times higher rates of HIV and hepatitis B and C viruses (HBV/HCV) compared with non-homeless vets, aidsmap reports.

Publishing their findings in Clinical Infectious Diseases, researchers analyzed data from the VA Corporate Data Warehouse, classifying as homeless those vets who had at least one visit to a VA homelessness service center; they classified the remaining veterans as non-homeless. In 2015, this amounted to 243,000 homeless veterans and 5.425 million non-homeless veterans.

Respectively, the homeless and non-homeless vets were: an average age of 50 and 61; 39 percent and 15 percent Black; 46 percent and 67 percent white; and 11 percent and 8 percent female.

The respective testing rates for the homeless and non-homeless vets were: 64 percent and 37 percent for HIV; 78 percent and 60 percent for hep C; and 53 percent and 28 percent for hep B.

The respective prevalence rates for the three viruses among those tested for them was: 2.3 percent and 1.5 percent for HIV; 15.3 percent and 4.5 percent for hep C; and 1.8 percent and 1.3 percent for hep B.

The respective overall prevalence rates for each of the viruses was: 1.5 percent and 0.44 percent for HIV; 12.1 percent and 2.7 percent for hep C; and 0.99 percent and 0.44 percent for hep B.

To read the study abstract, click here.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

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